

**Drs. Liversedge, McCurdie, Wong and Yoxall**

# **Practice Matters**

**October 2018**

## **It's flu time again!**



It is that time of year again, where patients that fall into an 'at risk' category can get their annual flu vaccination. We are now able to make appointments, and these can also be booked online and via the apps.

There are 2 vaccinations available this year; the vaccination for patients 65 and over is different to the one for patients under 65, and this is considered more effective for this age group than in previous years.

Each vaccine has a different delivery date, and reception staff will be able to tell you when the appointments are available for your age/risk group when you book your appointment.

Patients who should have the flu vaccination include;

- Aged 65 and over
- Pregnant woman
- those who have a chronic, long term respiratory disease, such as asthma or COPD
- those with neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's
- patients with diabetes
- patients who have a weakened immune system
- If you are a carer for someone
- Have had a stroke
- It is important that patients who are considered to be at risk have their flu vaccination each year, as flu can cause severe illness amongst vulnerable groups.

It is important that patients who are considered to be at risk have their flu vaccination each year, as flu can cause severe illness amongst vulnerable groups. The flu vaccination is offered free of charge on the NHS to those people who are considered to be at risk.

Children who are aged 2 and 3 will be able to make an appointment at the Surgery to have the nasal flu vaccination (where it is administered via a spray into the nostril). Children aged 4 will be offered the vaccine at their school, so you do not need to make an appointment with the nurse for this.

If you are unsure if you are in an 'at risk' category then please speak to reception who will be able to advise you further.

## Welcome to our Mental Health Practitioner

Our Surgery is now able to offer appointments with a range of health professionals as well as the GP's. We now welcome Ruth Ambrose, who is our mental health practitioner. Ruth joins us working alongside our Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Cath Povall, our musculoskeletal practitioner, Kurt Lievesley, and our Pharmacist, Ashrag Danga.

Ruth is trained to support people who are experiencing a range of common mental health problems, such as low mood and anxiety. 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime, and we now have Ruth available to help with this. As before, you do not need a referral to see Ruth, you can make an appointment in the usual manner. She will work with us on Monday mornings and Tuesday afternoons



If you would like to make an appointment with Ruth, please let reception know and they will advise what appointments are available. Her appointments are also available via the apps available, such as My GP or Evergreen Life.

## Appointment text reminders

We have in place a system that will send patients a text message reminder for upcoming appointments they have made with the Doctor or Nurse. This is usually sent 48 hours before the appointment, and you have the option to cancel from within the message if you need to.

Patients need to be made aware that the text messaging system does not recognise the difference between appointments where patients are coming to Surgery and those who have booked a telephone consultation, so you will receive a text reminder either way.



If you are cancelling an appointment by replying to the text message reminder you have received, please make sure to only use the word 'cancel' in your reply. Any other characters are not recognised and words other than 'cancel' being sent back will result in your appointment staying booked. Please do not use this service to send messages to the Practice, as this inbox is not regularly monitored and you may not receive a response.

If you do not receive text reminders, it is most likely that we do not hold your mobile number on your records. If this is the case, please speak to reception who can check your details.

## Weekend and Evening GP and Nurse appointments



You can now book to see a GP or nurse in Bolton at weekends or in the evenings. Appointments are available:

- 6.30pm – 8.00pm Monday to Friday
- 9am-1pm Saturdays
- 10am-1pm Sundays
- 9am-1pm Bank Holidays

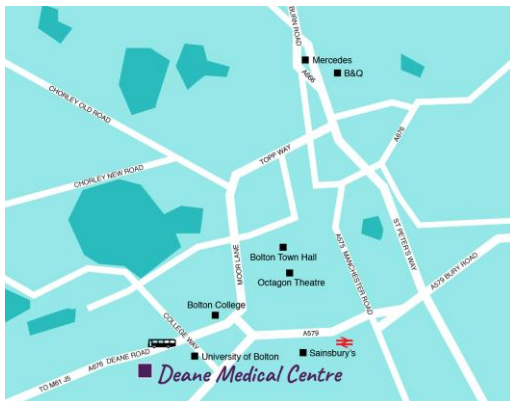
These appointments are not held in our buildings and will not be with your usual GP. These are for pre-booked routine appointments and this is not a walk-in service

You can see a Doctor for new concerns or about existing conditions, and the nurse can be seen for things like blood tests, blood pressure checks, contraception advice and health checks.

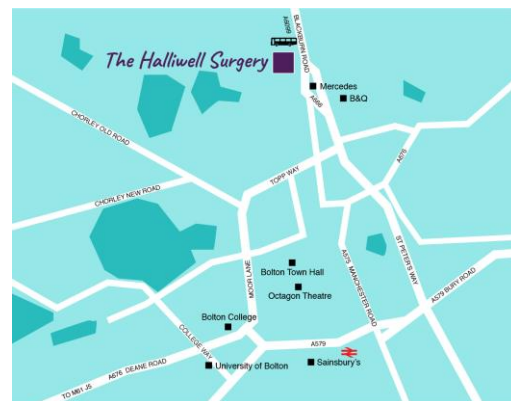
You will be given a choice from appointments available at either The Halliwell Surgery, or Deane Medical Centre, and these can be booked through reception, just let the receptionist know you would like a weekend appointment at one of the other surgeries.

The Doctor or Nurse will need your permission to access your medical records so they can provide the best advice and treatment, and you will be asked for this permission before your consultation takes place. You will be given an appointment card which will give you information about what to do if you cannot attend.

If you would like further information about this, please speak to a member of Reception staff who can advise.



Deane Medical Centre



The Halliwell Surgery

## Are you a carer for someone?

If you look after someone, whether it be a family member, friend or a neighbour who needs help with day to day tasks, then you are considered to be a carer. You can provide help with things such as shopping, helping with washing or other household chores, or live in with someone who needs support with their personal care, such as getting washed, dressed and making something to eat, or needs help remembering to take medication.



As a carer, it is important that your health and wellbeing is looked after as well, so that you can be fit and healthy to cope with the role that you have. If you are registered with us as a carer, we will offer you an annual health check with the nurse and you will have an opportunity to discuss any problems or concerns you might have. Of course, you can speak to a GP any time, but this appointment is all about you.

We have lots of information in the waiting room for people who are carers, to let you know where you can go to get additional support and information, what events there are going on in our local area, and where you can get in touch with other people who find themselves in the same position as you and might need someone to talk to.

There is a website especially for carers in Bolton, which is [www.carers.uk.org](http://www.carers.uk.org), and on here you can find a huge amount of information on topics such as getting help with benefits, to days out. If you need any other specific information, please ask at reception.

## Patient Online Services

Patients have previously been able to register to use the Patient Services website, where you can book, cancel and view appointments and order repeat medication. This website is still in operation, but there are now also apps available so that you can do the same thing but on your mobile phone or tablet.



You may be required to register to use the app you have chosen, but you can follow their instructions once downloaded.

If you wish to use the Patient Services website, or if the app you have chosen provides a link to Patient Services so you can order medication online, you will need to call in to the Surgery to register your details. You will be asked to provide two forms of identification, and will need to provide a current email address so you can then be given a username and password to register an account.

Some apps work from your mobile number, so it is important to make sure that we hold the correct details for you if you wish to use the online services.

## Repeat Prescriptions



We would like to remind our patients who are on regular repeat medication to allow enough time to order their medication before this is needed. Please do not wait until you have run out of medication to request a further prescription; requests take 48 hours to process and we cannot guarantee any requests for a same day, urgent prescription. Items that can be bought over the counter will not be processed as urgent.

If you have signed up to the EPS system, your prescriptions will still be processed within the 48 hour time window, but may not be dispensed and ready to collect at your chosen pharmacy when you arrive to pick it up.

If it is important that you are not waiting when you collect your prescription, it is advisable to ring your chosen chemist to check whether this is dispensed and ready to pick up. The Practice cannot be held responsible for prescriptions that have been sent to the pharmacy on time, but are not ready to be dispensed.

Reception staff are following the guidelines and protocols set out by the GP's for processing repeat prescriptions requests, and we will not tolerate any abusive behaviour towards staff if you are unhappy with this aspect of our service.

## Contact details for you and your family

Please ensure we have the correct address and contact telephone numbers held on your record, and the records of any children in your family. Not only will this ensure we can contact you if the Doctor has requested to see you, but you will be able to use the apps available to use on your smartphone/tablet.

You can view this newsletter and find lots of other information on our practice website  
[www.egertonanddunscarhealthcentre.nhs.uk](http://www.egertonanddunscarhealthcentre.nhs.uk)

You can also book, cancel and view appointments at  
[www.patientservices.co.uk](http://www.patientservices.co.uk)

